

Pandit Shashanka Bakshi

Pandit Shashanka Bakshi has engaged in a life devoted to the art of Tabla performance and Indian Classical Music. Along with intensive tabla study from the age of 6, he also completed an education in the field of Commerce from Ranchi University and passed I.C.W.A from Kolkata obtained with credit. He maintained a prestigious position as Sr. Executive in the Internal Audit Department of the Steel Authority of India Ltd. for 28 years along with touring extensively worldwide and performing with distinguished musicians, and has also taught Tabla to numerous students in India and the United States for several decades.

Born into an established Bengali family in Jamshedpur, India, his parents observed in him from a very early age an aptitude for the art of Tala Badya Playing which they encouraged and promoted. Shashanka received his initial training in Tabla under the tutelage of Pt. Bhola Prasad of Benares Gharana who was well versed in the subjects of both Pakhawaj and Tabla. After some time Pt. Bhola Prasad sent him to receive advanced training under the celebrated Tabla maestro, Prof. Kanai Dutta, who was a resolute figure in the lineage of Lucknow and Rampur Gharanas and ultimately, with the encouragement of Pt. Bhola Prasad, he became the direct disciple of Prof. Kanai Dutta. Shashanka received intensive training under his brilliant guidance for several years until his untimely demise, after which he was requested by the legendary Tabla maestro Pt. Samta Prasad to become his direct disciple. He continued to receive intensive training from him in the Benares Gharana lineage for the remainder of Pt. Samta Prasad's life. In a most notable event, Shashanka was introduced to the giant of Indian Classical Music, Dr. Hirendra Kumar Ganguly, who highly valued Shashanka's ability and inspired him by imparting to him knowledge regarding many complicated aspects of the subject.

Shashanka has participated in many prestigious Music Festivals and Conferences held in different parts of India, among the most noteworthy being the Doverlane Music Conference, Tansen Sangeet Sammelan, Sadarang Music Conference, Salt Lake Music Festival, Rabindra Bharati Society and Uttarpara Music Conference. He has accompanied such celebrated artists as the late Pt. Nikhil Banerjee, the late Ustad Bahadur Khan, Ustad Imrat Khan, Nishat Khan, Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia, Pt. Ravi Shankar, Pt. V.G. Jog, Buddhadev Dasgupta, the late Sreekanth Bakre and many others. He also rendered accompaniment in the Golden Trio tour in several European countries with Pt. Vishwa Mohan Bhatt on Guitar, Daya Shankar on Sahanai, and Pt. Tarun Bhattacharya on Santoor. Among his recordings, he accompanied with Pt. Tarun Bhattacharya and Pt. Daya Shankar which was released through Music of the World, New York. He has toured extensively during his musical career throughout India and in different parts of Europe, the U.K., the United States and several Middle Eastern countries.

Shashanka's devotion to music and arduous practice has given him the capacity to acquire a vast repertoire and ultimately become a dexterous performer both in accompaniment and as a soloist. His performances show a musicianship which speaks volumes in regard to his intensive training and dedication, and has established a revered position for him in the lineage of Indian Classical Music performers.

